

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL</b>	
	<b>Chapter 4:</b> Assessment (Investigation)	<b>Effective Date:</b> July 1, 2007
	<b>Section 8:</b> Entry into Home or Facility	<b>Version:</b> 1

<b>POLICY</b>	<b>OLD POLICY: 205.44</b>
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- The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may make in-person contact with a child in his/her home or any other place where the child may be.
- **[NEW]** DCS is required to seek permission to enter a **home** for the purpose of conducting interviews and/or assessing the home's condition. Permission to enter must be given by an **adult** living in the home. Children under the age of 18 years cannot give permission to enter the home. *Exception: DCS may only enter without permission when accompanied by Law Enforcement Authority (LEA).*
- **[NEW]** If one adult who lives in a home gives permission to enter, and a second adult who lives in the home verbally objects, DCS will not enter the home and will instead seek a court order.
- **[NEW]** DCS reserves the right to revoke a foster home license if denied access to a foster home.
- **[NEW]** DCS is required to check in, present DCS issued identification, request permission from an Administrator (e.g. - Director/and or Program Coordinator, Principal, etc.)and/or follow all written protocols when entering **schools, child care centers, residential facilities, medical facilities or correctional facilities** for the purpose of conducting interviews.
- DCS may request an order from the Juvenile Court if admission to a **home or facility** is denied. If an order from the Court is granted, DCS will gain entry by accompanying LEA when LEA executes the order.
- DCS will not enter a home if there is suspicion that it contains a meth lab (see [Indiana Drug Endangered Children Response Protocol](#)).
- **[NEW]** **Permission to enter** a home or facility will **not constitute consent to interview** a child. DCS will seek permission to interview a child in accordance with the policies, [Consent to Interview Child](#) and [Exigent Circumstances](#).
- **[NEW]** DCS will immediately contact LEA and request emergency assistance if a child is believed to be home alone **and** it is believed the child's safety and well-being is in danger.

#### Code References

- [IC 31-33-8-7 Scope of Investigation; order for access to home, school or other place](#)

<b>PROCEDURE</b>
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Note: Prior to entering a home or facility for the purposes of conducting an interview with a **child**, the FCM will follow procedures contained in separate policies, [Consent to Interview Child](#) and [Exigent Circumstances](#).

Prior to entering a home or facility the FCM will:

1. Ask to speak to an adult in the house (or facility personnel);

2. Introduce himself/herself and show official DCS identification;
3. Explain the purpose of the visit without revealing any confidential information about the CA/N assessment (investigation);
4. Seek permission to enter if a home (follow visitor check-in procedures if a facility).
5. Document permission given to enter home or facility and by whom.

Upon entering a **home** the FCM will:

1. Exit the home immediately and without alarming the persons inside if at any time he/she suspects the home may contain a meth lab. See [Indiana Drug Endangered Child Response Protocol](#).
2. Discontinue the assessment (investigation) if at any point the FCM becomes concerned for his/her safety (e.g. - persons in the home become hostile or threatening or there are other dangerous conditions in the home). Seek Supervisory input to make alternate arrangements to complete the necessary interview(s) and/or home conditions assessment.

If access to a home or facility is denied, the FCM will:

1. Request an order from the Juvenile Court to gain admission to the home/facility; and
2. If Court Order is granted, return to the home/facility with LEA, who will execute the Court Order and gain admission.
3. Notify the entity responsible for licensing the home (local DSC office or LCPA) if denied entry to a licensed foster home.
4. Document that the request was denied and who denied the request.

## RELATED INFORMATION

### Home

For the purpose of this policy, “home” means home, foster home, relative home or licensed child care home.

### Facility

For the purpose of this policy, “facility” means a facility or institution, including, but not limited to, a school, child care center, registered childcare ministry, group home, inpatient (residential) treatment center, hospital, juvenile detention center and Indiana Department of Corrections facility.

## FORMS AND TOOLS

- N/A